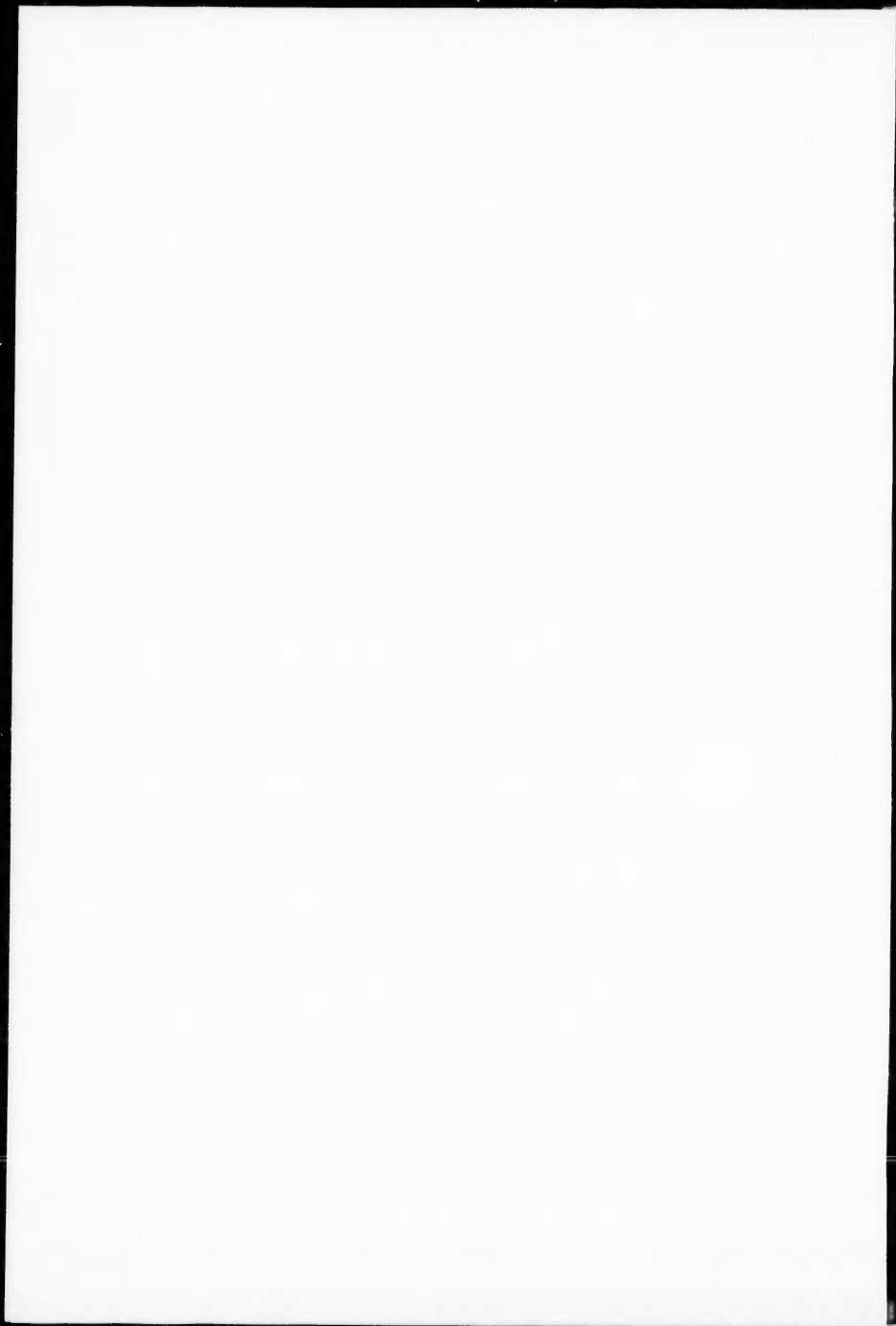


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ALSO THE HISTORY, GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

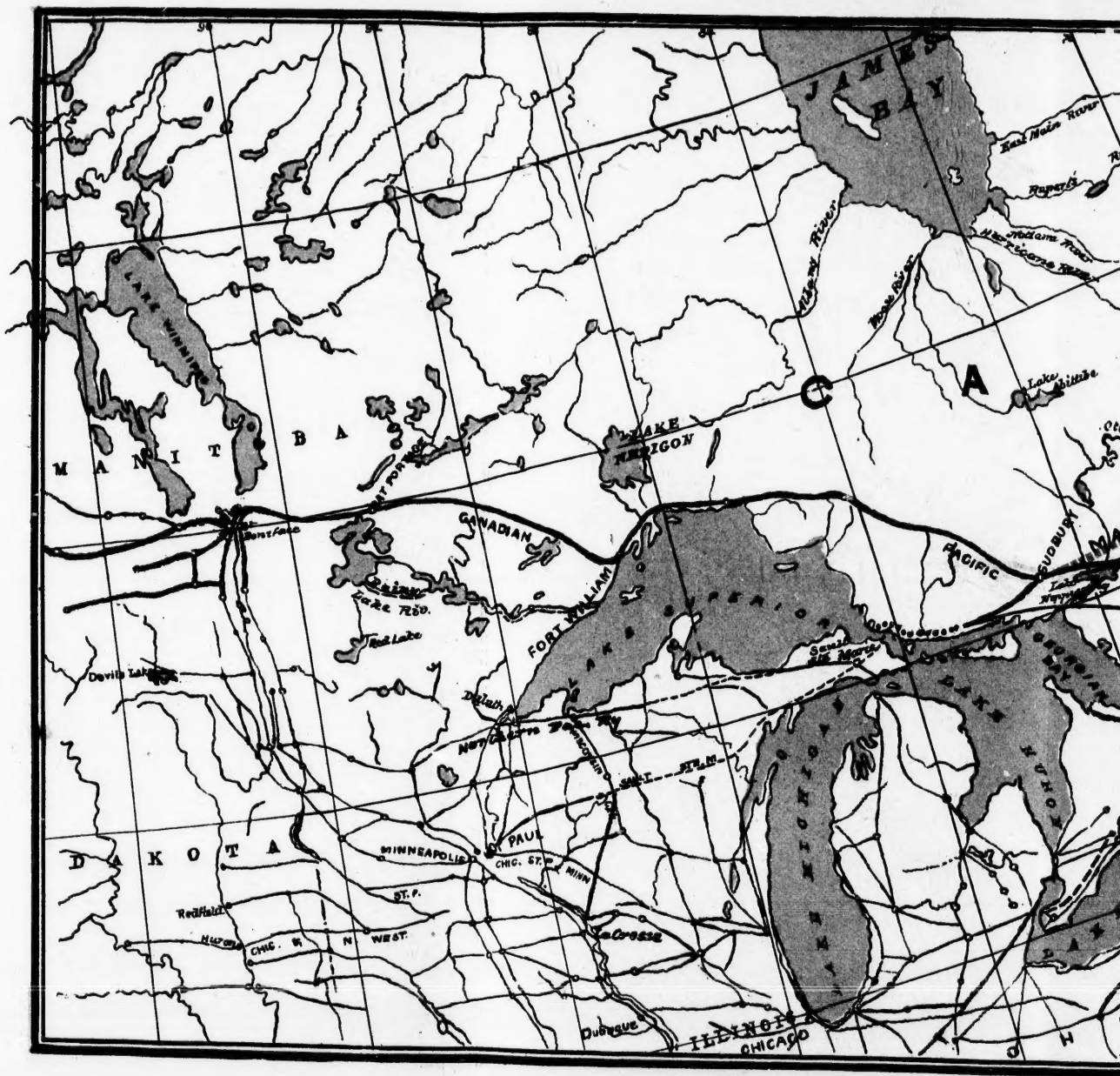
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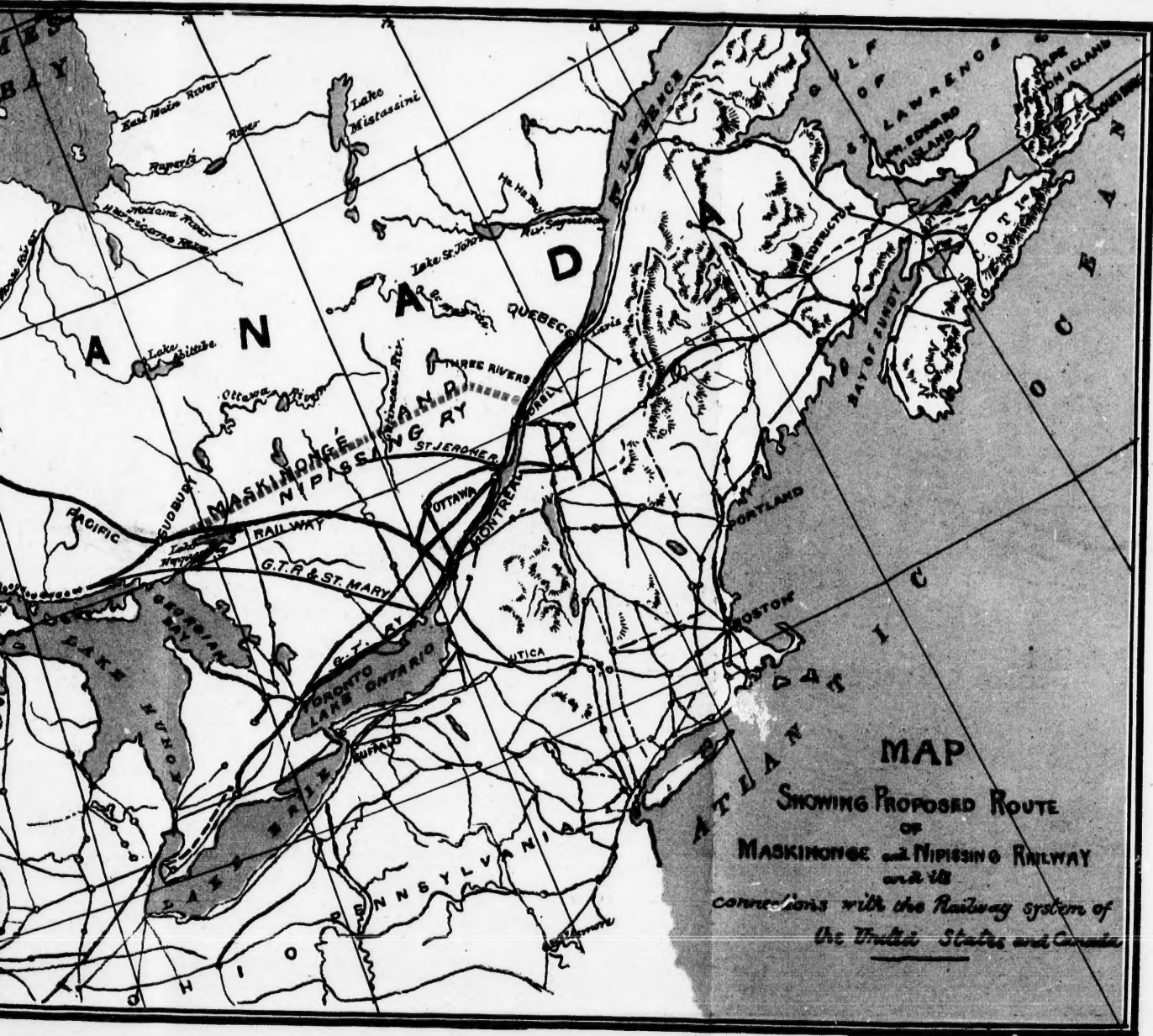


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Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway.

On the 2nd, June, 1886, the Dominion Parliament of Canada passed an Act incorporating Thomas W. Ferry, James J. White, E. H. Talbott, John H. Verrall and Laurent Grenier, as a company for the construction of the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway.

ITS LENGTH.

Its length will be about 450 miles.

ITS ROUTE.

Starting from some point on the Canadian Pacific Railway at or near Maskinongé or Louiseville, in the Province of Quebec, to or near the parish of St. Michel-des-Saints, on the River Mattawin, thence to the point of intersection with the Gatineau River, north of Lake Desert, and continuing in a westerly direction until it reaches the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway at or near Lake Nipissing.

ITS PRACTICABILITY.

The Company's engineers have so far carefully surveyed 50 miles of the route, and report that they were able to cross the Laurentian range with comparatively little difficulty.

This railway will open up a country of at least 75 miles wide, on nearly the whole of its length.

There is to the south of the projected line a strip of land having a width of 50 (fifty) miles, with a few isolated settlements, and to the north a width of 25 to 30 miles of lands which can be cultivated to advantage. The only settlements to be found on the latter side are those at the upper end of Lake Temiscamingue.

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SOIL AND AGRICULTURE.

The reports of the Rev. Mr. Mondor, parish priest at St. Michel-des-Saints, and Revd. Curé Labelle, of St. Jerome, go to show that the whole country lying between St. Michel-des-Saints and the River Rouge, a tract of about 50 miles in length and 60 to 75 in width, is eminently suited for agricultural purposes. The soil is mostly clay and yellow sandy loam. Between the Rouge and a distant point to the west, there is the same width of arable lands, the fertility whereof requires no better evidence than the astonishingly rapid prosperity acquired by the few thousand settlers who have, of late, gone towards Lake Desert and Lake Nominigüe.

In order to form a correct idea of the agricultural resources of the upper region, it suffices to look at the settlements full of promise in the neighborhood of Lake Temiscamingue. But we have, besides, the official reports of the Quebec and Ottawa Governments on that section of the country. For instance, the following remarks are to be read in the report of the Crown Lands Department (Quebec) for 1877: "The Valley of the Ottawa, or to speak in a more general way, the Valleys of the Rouge, Maskinongé, Lièvre, Gatineau and Coulonge Rivers are invaluable from a colonization standpoint. The rich deposits of lime phosphates which are continuously discovered cannot fail to fix attention upon its importance. The climate is most favorable and the soil of great fertility." Lindsay Russell, formerly Surveyor-General for the Dominion, in his report for the year 1870, says: "The head of the Little Nation seems to me to be a region far better fitted for agricultural purposes than the portion already settled at its mouth; in a like manner, the banks of the Lièvre appeared to me more arid and more rocky along the 50 miles nearest to its mouth than along the 50 or 60 miles above."

Mr. Bouchette, in his Crown Lands report of 1859, writes: "The Valleys of the Rivers Rouge and the Lièvre offer a great extent of land of a superior quality and unsurpassed by any in Upper or Lower Canada." The Revd. C. A. M. Paradis, O. M. I., in his reports to the Lord Bishop of Ottawa, in 1884, says: "Soil very rich, and unequalled."

Sir Charles Tupper in the sitting of the House of Commons of the 17th May, 1883, spoke as follows: "Now I may say that it has been conclusively proved to the Government—what is known to many hon. members of the House—that lying there to the north, on the other side of the Ottawa River, is a great

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country capable of being formed, at no distant date, into a great Province. There is here in fact, another Province of Quebec, which yesterday was comparatively unknown, and comparatively unpeopled, but a country that the closest and most careful investigation proves to be of enormous extent, and of great fertility."

Mr. Joseph Tassé, M. P., a leading Canadian, in a speech of the same date says: "If we consider the subject (viz, the policy of granting subsidies to railways) from a revenue stand point, no one is so interested as the Federal Government in subsidizing railways, because they are the best factors in the prosperity of the country. The railway is the most important lever which can be applied to develop the resources of any country. Take for instance what has been done in the regions north of St. Jerome. In the last five or six years the Curé Labelle alone has been able to settle there some 10,000 souls. If each person pays \$5 of indirect taxes, 10,000 persons will pay \$50,000 of taxes annually, or one-half million in ten years, and if these people have a railway what a development will take place!"

Mr. Alonzo Wright, one of our most noted men said: "The construction of those railways will practically add another Province to the Dominion. I said to a member of the Government the other day, in discussing the general railway policy of the Government in connection with the North-West, and its ultimate development, that under the very shadow of the Parliament Buildings, lying at our very door, was an immense and unknown territory, teeming with mineral and all other kinds of wealth. I also told him that it is only a railway system which can secure for this territory its appropriate development. The County of Ottawa extends far into the interior, the Gatineau River runs some 400 miles into this region and takes its rise in the vicinity of the great affluents of the Saguenay and the St. Maurice. The country lying between these rivers is the one which we are trying to open up, it is literally a *terra incognita*. This country possesses great mineral, lumbering and agricultural resources. I am assured that far up in that Gatineau region there is much good land, on which millions of Canadian people could find happy homes. The lacustrine system of this country is one of the finest in the world. The whole country is dotted with lakes, teeming with trout, and filled with all the fish which abound in our Canadian waters."

A pamphlet, published in 1883, by the Diocesan Colonization Societies of Montreal and Ottawa, contains the following: "The country is rolling, that is to say there are alternating valleys and

elevated heights. But these heights, of about 50 to 300 feet in elevation, do not deserve the name of mountains; they are but hills, acclivities of low grade, in groups, wide and rounded, which the plough can climb in most cases to the very top. Between these heights the valleys extend often for several miles. They serve as basins for a great number of lakes and rivers which drain the land and give to the landscape an appearance as picturesque as it is varied.

In an agricultural point of view, if a rolling country has disadvantages it has also conveniences. As soon as it is cleared, the land is ready for cultivation, because the slopes drain off easily without those outlets and ditches which in low lands cost the farmer so much labour.

It is the same in the Valley of the Ottawa, as in the Plain of the St. Lawrence; rocky, sandy and marshy places are to be found, but these spots are the exception; more than two-thirds of the land is fit for cultivation. The soil is that ordinarily known as sandy loam. At the bottom of the valleys, on the banks of the rivers, clay and blue clay are found, but in general it is the loam which predominates throughout the region. This kind of soil is a mixture of sand and clay. But here the clay contains iron, which gives it a reddish color. Now sand mixed with iron-bearing clay makes excellent soil. On the other hand the soil is soft to the touch, and it consolidates under pressure, a plain indication that it contains a fair proportion of lime. This is why these loams bring to perfection wheat, oats, peas, barley, buckwheat, maize, potatoes, and all other kinds of vegetables. *The forest contains trees of the finest growth; maple trees of from two to three feet in diameter, black and red birch, cedars, and white birch of the same size, etc. It is evident that a soil which produces such trees must be excellent.*

People who had brought from the old parishes prejudices against this loamy soil prefer it now to any other. It is because, say they, it is suited to every kind of grain, easier to drain, and ready for sowing earlier in the spring time; it is also easier to manure and to work, and suffers less during the summer from excess of rain, and bears more successfully excessive drought.

Let us add that this soil brings to maturity in a marvellous way grass and hay, and furnishes magnificent pasturage; which is owing not only to the quality of the soil but to the pure water coming from the springs and brooks which abound everywhere in this rolling country.

There are to be met with, it is true, lots or parts of lots which are unfit for cultivation. These lands should be left with

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the timber standing, for firewood and building material, and in the course of time they will come to possess great value. How much land in the old parishes would now be worth double its actual value if it had not been cleared.

To sum up all, the soil has a high value attached to it. This must be so, inasmuch as lots are to be seen, having but a few acres cleared, selling for \$500, \$800 and \$1000.

It no longer astonishes one to hear the Hon. J. A. Chapleau say, when speaking of this country: "When for the first time I looked upon the majestic forms of nature which the Eternal Artist has concealed in this corner of the world, with these refreshing lakes, these numerous streams, these fairy vistas which old Europe would envy,—the destinies of our race assumed to my eyes a totally different appearance, and I felt that if our Province was to become great, it would be on the North side that it would become so." (To the electors of the County of Terrebonne, 1st February, 1887.)

As to the portion situate between Mattawin and St. Alexis, read the report on it which the Rev. Mr. Mondor makes: "There is still left much land suitable for cultivation between Mattawin and St. Alexis Des Monts; and everywhere woods, magnificent water-powers and even mines." This is what the Rev. Mr. Paradis says of it: "*A climate favorable for the production of all kinds of grain, absolutely none excepted. I see no great difference between the climate of Témiscaming and that of Ottawa, if only to say on behalf of the former that the heat of summer is most agreeably tempered by the proximity of great bodies of water.*"

We read further in the pamphlet published by the Diocesan Colonisation Societies of Montreal and Ottawa: "Lake Nominigou, which occupies the central position of this region (between Mattawin and the Gatineau), is situate on the same parallel as Three-Rivers, but much further west, which is important to note, for it is known that the climate becomes milder as one proceeds westward." We may conclude from this fact that the climate is milder than at Three-Rivers; it is even in some places more so than Montreal. That the snow falls less deeply and that it begins to melt sooner; these are the facts which the settlers themselves establish to the satisfaction of whomsoever listens to them.

In 1876, says the curé Labelle, "I proceeded 100 miles to the North of St. Jérôme, to the last farm on the River Rouge, and the preceding year the seed time and harvest had, on this farm been begun three weeks before our own. It is true that I was still much below the latitude of the City of Quebec."

Lastly we come to Professor Macoun, who, when giving evidence before the Colonization and Immigration Committee, at Ottawa, said, in speaking of the region to the North of the Province of Quebec, and among other things of the country surrounding the Lakes Témiscaming and St. Jean: "The frosts are not more frequent there than in certain parts of Ontario. besides, these frosts are produced in the lowlands and not in the very unsheltered spots, as is most wrongfully believed. The plants which are found about thirty miles from Hudson Bay prove that the climate there is not more severe than that of Quebec." *Now the region which the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway will traverse is one degree south of Lake St. John.*

THE MASKINONGÉ AND NIPISSING RAILWAY AS A COLONIZATION ROAD.

Here is what Mr. Dawson, the eminent M. P. for Algoma, said on the third reading of the Bill (on the 30th April, 1886):

"MR. DAWSON. Before the Bill is read the third time, I wish to make a few remarks. I think this is one of the most important Bills that has been put before the House this Session. The Railway will pass through a country with which I am well acquainted, from along the Mattawin, a tributary of the St. Maurice, the north of Lake St. Peter, and thence to Lake Témiscamingue and then South-westerly until it joins the Pacific Railway at or near Mattawan. This road will be a means of leading settlement to a very important country, where there is an immense deal of good lands and good timber. It is very important to Lower Canada especially, that some way should be found to draw settlement into the interior, and this road will be the means of drawing settlement from the densely populated districts of Lower Canada away back to the interior, and opening a field for colonization, thus preventing the people going to other lands to seek homes. If this road can be carried out, and I hope the promoters will be able to find the necessary capital, it will be one of the grandest and best schemes brought before the House this Session. I could not let this opportunity pass without expressing my opinion of the importance of this work, and I hope its promoters will meet with every encouragement from the Government."

The Honorable J. A. Chapleau agreed to give his powerful and warm support to the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway. The following letter was written last year to a friend.

OTTAWA, 11th March, 1886.

"I take this opportunity of answering your letter of the 10th instant. Not only am I not opposed to the building of a railway from Louiseville to Mattawan and beyond; but I perceive in this construction of tributary railways the carrying out of my programme of 1831. This construction is of the utmost importance for our fellow countrymen and for the future of French Canada.

I see in the peopling of the north country the best auxiliary, the most powerful promoter of our national enterprises.

The Province of Quebec is the stronghold of our race, it provides the foundations of our nationality; and in order to give these foundations greater depth we must penetrate northward and there establish ourselves.

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I have no occasion to add more to these few words: you understand me. These schemes belong to a great, a true national policy; and this is what I want to carry out, leaving to others the empty boast of power, and the vain satisfaction derived from the defeat of adversaries. Which means to say that I will encourage these lofty enterprises without consideration of party."

Yours truly,

J. A. CHAPLEAU.

May 30th, 1886.

".....asking from the government at the next session this subsidy, while pointing out the necessity for this undertaking.

I do not doubt but that the Privy Council will take your petition into serious and favorable consideration.

In any case please reckon on me as a friend devoted to the great cause of colonization, which now requires railways more than anything else to ensure its progress.

J. A. CHAPLEAU."

REV. R. BELIVEAU,

Curé of St. Ursula, Quebec.

It is almost incredible that the complete opening to colonization of a section so useful to the country has been neglected up to this day, when enormous sums have been expended to give *two railways* to the Lake St. John Valley, which is greatly inferior in area, climate and natural resources. A large expenditure has been also incurred to secure the building of several other railways whose advantages to the country are, to say the least, secondary if not absolutely problematical.

Was it a reason, because the Maskinongé and Nipissing regions are offering more advantages than the other sections for colonization purposes to expect that the settlers would enthusiastically cut their way into its dense forests?

The times are long past when the pioneers of our old settlements, seeing themselves surrounded on all sides by dense woods, went with joy in their heart and an axe on their shoulders to the subjugation of a lot whereon to build a hearth for their family.

To-day, whole families prefer taking a railway train and travelling six or nine hundred miles, rather than penetrating only ten or fifteen miles into unsettled parts where there are no easy communications. And they are perfectly right in respect to their material welfare, for they could never compete with those who enjoy better facilities in the way of transport.

If we desire to keep our co-patriots at home and induce strangers to settle in our midst, we must of necessity commence by opening the forest with railways. We shall not succeed otherwise.

ROOM FOR SETTLERS.

The Rev. Messrs. Mondor and Labelle agree that between St. Michel-des-Saints and the Rivière Rouge alone, there can be erected 30 or 40 flourishing parishes of 2,000 inhabitants each, and in the eyes of those who know, however slightly, the immense area of lands fit for colonization lying between the Rouge and Lake Nipissing, there is no exaggeration in saying that at least two millions (2,000,000) of people could find room along the route of the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway.

CLIMATE.

From the reports of the best informed parties and according to the isothermal maps prepared by Commander Andrew R. Gordon, R.N., we are in possession of evidence that from St. Michel-des-Saints to the Gatineau, there falls a great deal less snow and the climate is far less severe than in the localities nearer the St. Lawrence River.

At the Gatineau we enter into the Ontario climate, with very little disadvantage against the railway region. As this is protected by the Laurentian chain against the north-eastern winds which carry the vapors of the Gulf, the atmosphere is dryer and consequently healthier than in the valley of the St. Lawrence.

FORESTS.

Let it suffice to say that the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway will pass through the invaluable timber limits on the Du Loup, Maskinongé, l'Assomption, Ouareau, Achigan, Rouge, Petite-Nation, Du Lièvre, Gatineau, Colonge, des Noix, Du Moine and Ottawa Rivers, that is to say more than three-fourths at least of the richest woodlands of Canada.

MINES.

Iron, mica, plumbago, phosphates, copper, gold and silver mines are to be found in abundance.

WATER-POWERS.

Exclusive of the great water-powers supplied by the northern rivers, from Maskinongé to St Michel-des-Saints there exists an almost uninterrupted succession of some of the most powerful and least expensive hydraulic powers of North America.

One will form an idea thereof if we only mention the Ste. Ursule Falls, situate in the County of Maskinongé, where a power of four or five thousand horses is pent up in three channels which are marvels of nature. The falls are placed at such convenient distances as to permit of the establishment of fifty manufactories, and they can be dammed with flumes costing about \$200 each.

BEAUTY OF THE SCENERY.

The scenery is simply enchanting on account of the multitude of fine rivers and magnificent lakes spread all over that region.

MASKINONGÉ THE TEMPORARY TERMINUS.

The County of Maskinongé has been selected as the *initial terminus* of the M. & N. because: 1. The comparatively easy building of the first sections will allow the Company to consolidate the undertaking at a much cheaper cost than if the starting point were elsewhere; 2. Whatever other place might have been chosen, it would have been necessary to cross the Laurentian chain of mountains in the County of Maskinongé, as there alone exists a feasible passage, namely between the St. Maurice River and St. Jérôme; 3. *At 15 miles from its starting point, the road reaches vast woodlands whose working will insure at the outset the repayment of the rolling stock expenditure*; 4. The building of the Maskinongé trunk line would have, sooner or later, become a necessity in the interests of the sawn lumber trade with the United States, *via* Richelieu River.

This, however, does not prevent the road from having, at a near date, its

PERMANENT TERMINUS AT QUEBEC,

as the importance of its traffic will make it compulsory that it be connected with summer and winter sea-ports.

THE CONSTRUCTION NOT TO COMMENCE AT LAKE NIPISSING, AND WHY.

The export trade which this road is particularly called to favor runs from west to east, and so long as the railway did not acquire an outlet by means of the commercial lines from the east, its working would be ruinous, as the traffic would have to be carried to Nipissing, thence to be forwarded to the east; whilst, by starting from Maskinongé, the nearest market to the place of demand is immediately secured.

SOURCES OF TRAFFIC.

There is no doubt that so soon as the railway reaches the vast forests, limit owners will remove their saw mills thereto, in order to avoid the long and costly drive, and so as to work them all the year round, instead of the summer season only, as they are compelled to do now. The mines will be worked on a large scale, and a great variety of industries will develop themselves in a short time. Lastly, colonization will not fail to rapidly increase and be followed by a considerable export and import trade. So much for local traffic; but the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway must share largely in the

INTER-PROVINCIAL AND INTER-CONTINENTAL TRAFFIC.

Even the least perspicacious of men most acknowledge that the general traffic on this railway will be enormous, if they only reflect that its western starting point lies exactly on the Pacific Railway, which brings the traffic from the Canadian Far West; that it is near the Sault Ste. Marie Railway, which brings it from the American Far West; that it is on French River, which communicates with Lake Huron by the Georgian Bay; that it is at the junction of the Northern, North-Western, Gravenhurst & Oulander Railways, which pass through one of the wealthiest sections of Ontario. Then, on the way down, it will connect, at Lake Desert, with the Desert and St. Jerome Railway, which will run to Montreal; at St. Alexis des Monts, in the County of Maskinongé, with the Joliette Railway, which has now reached St. Felix de Valois: only about twenty miles remain to be built to make the connection. Furthermore, it will strike the Pacific Railway at the lower end of the County of Maskinongé, nearly opposite the Richelieu River. Lastly, when fully completed, it will connect St. Alexis-des-Monts with the Grand Piles, on the St. Maurice River, where there is a railway to Three-Rivers: and will communicate through the Grand Trunk Railway with the south shore and the Eastern States. From Three-Rivers it will cross the Laurentides Hills and the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway. It will then have its terminus at Quebec, where it may perhaps be the means of bringing about the building of a bridge across the St. Lawrence. Its traffic could then be directed from Lévis either to Halifax, by the Intercolonial Railway, or to the ports of the State of Maine, by the Lévis and Kennebec Railway.

We now may assert without fear of contradiction, that the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway will be

THE MOST IMPORTANT RAILWAY OF THE DOMINION, AFTER THE
CANADIAN PACIFIC AND THE GRAND TRUNK RAILWAYS.

The numerous rivers to be crossed by the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway will be so many vigorous arteries bringing life to the trunk; and the lines connecting with it so many powerful arms which will bring and distribute a heavy traffic into general circulation. So, in this Railway we shall possess a perfect trunk whose vigour and activity will be reckoned as an important factor in the general prosperity of Canada.

It will be the true Inland Short Line which our best political economists have been dreaming of for years.

TRAFFIC.

THE NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

There is no use concealing the fact that, on account of the extensive length of our frontier and the small depth of the settlements in the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, Canada would be exposed to serious dangers in the case of a war with our neighbours. The best means of making up for this state of affairs, which might cause a national disaster, would be the establishment behind our mountains, of a back country which could be rendered almost impregnable by the massing there of a strong and vigorous population.

The region settled by the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway would become the citadel of Canada, and our population would find there a secure refuge in the hour of danger; and the railway would be

A MILITARY ROUTE

whereon our armies could circulate easily and safely.

So, Quebec, Ontario, in fact the whole Dominion, are equally interested in the early realization of this enterprise.

Not only will the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway be one of the best modes of protecting our country, but its construction would save millions to the Governments of the Dominion, of Quebec, and Ontario.

For after all the day must come when it will be decided not to leave any longer uninhabited a region so vast and fertile as is the north of Quebec and Ontario, especially in the face of the immense sacrifices which have been made to populate the North-West, a country not offering more, if as many, advantages as this section of the Dominion.

And unless the immediate construction of the Maskinongé

and Nipissing Railway is assured, with that view, these governments will have to subsidize a number of small branches all bound to run inland and to have their terminus in actual blind alleys, leaving between them zones of land which will be very hard to colonize.

These multiplied subsidies will far exceed the amount with which the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway could be built, and will not yield the tenth part of the benefits to be derived from its construction, passing as it does through the centre of the region to be colonized.

But we will go still further and maintain that, absolutely speaking, not only would the building of the Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway save to the country hazardous expenditure, but, from a strictly financial standpoint.

IT WILL BE A MONETARY SUCCESS.

In fact, the building of this road must, in a few years, increase the population by at least 1,000,000, souls. According to the last Budget Speech delivered in the Commons, our population of 5,000,000 has given a revenue of \$38,000,000, that is in round numbers \$6 per head; regarding only the Federal revenue. When there will be 1,000,000 more inhabitants, \$6,000,000 will be added to the revenue.

Then we must admit that even if the Company were to receive the highest subsidy, that is \$10,000 per mile, it would subscribe at least as much. That money will very likely come from a foreign country, and if is not invested here permanently, it may favor elsewhere, interests, diametrically antagonistic to ours.

It must not be forgotten either that the first investment is not alone to be taken into consideration. Whenever capital as considerable as this, will require, has been placed in a country, it has to work towards that country's general good, and, in order to preserve itself and face rival enterprises, it has to constantly call for new investments. The Canadian Pacific and the Grand Trunk Railways illustrate this principle.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE COMPANY.

Ten miles of the route have been definitely located; 50 more miles have been completely surveyed, and 6 additional miles have been surveyed in a preliminary manner. We have, by so doing, very satisfactorily solved the problem of knowing whether the Laurentian chain could be traversed without too great difficulties.

The mountains have now been crossed, and the Company is sure to reach the end of the route unimpeded.

We must mention a subsidy by the Quebec Government of 4,000 acres of land per mile in favor of a railway which would start from the lower end of the County of Maskinongé, passing by Mattawa (St. Michel-des-Saints).

CONCLUSION.

In this age of headlong progress, when success can be acquired only by speed and low prices, the only means for the Dominion to benefit by the vast riches hidden in the north of the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario is the establishment of fast railway communications.

A railway is indispensable in order to open the forest to the pioneer; to take the minerals to the market, without having the profits eaten up by the cost of transportation; and to allow all kinds of industries to utilize the mighty water-powers.

The Maskinongé and Nipissing Railway is the only agent which is able to put into operation for the good of the country, all those latent forces which sleep at our doors.

This railway will represent on the north shore what the Grand Trunk has been on the south bank; from a vast unpeopled desert it will cause to spring up, as if by magic, large and prosperous agricultural establishments, towns and villages where riches will abound and industry flourish.

THE NECESSITY FOR THIS RAILWAY

In order to establish the necessity for this railway, we will reproduce the remarks made on this subject by Mr. E. A. Bernard, the Director of Agriculture for the Province of Quebec:—

“But the question above all, the question of vital importance for the City of Three-Rivers, for this District, for the whole Province, is that of a trunk line of railway, shortening by more than 250 miles the course of the Canadian Pacific Railway from ocean to ocean. The report of the Board of Trade has the credit of having brought to light the usefulness of such a road and the possibility of constructing it.

To any person who looks over the map of the Province of Quebec, such a road commands attention from the single fact that it shortens by about one-third the line taken by the Canadian Pacific from the Province line to Quebec. But this shortening, all important as it is, is not the only advantage which the proposed road possesses. It will initiate an era of considerable prosperity for the agriculture, colonization, commerce and industry of this Province. Such a road would open out the Province of Quebec

from one end to the other, right through the heart of the country, making by means of the new settlements at Témiscaming, Deserit, La Rouge, Mattawin, etc., great centres on the transcontinental line. The Provincial Government is still the owner of almost all the lands on the line of the proposed road. Now these lands have at the present moment only a nominal value of about 20 cents per acre. By the completion of this railway they would acquire a real and instantaneous value of several dollars per acre, chiefly on account of the merchantable timber which is known to be very abundant in these parts, although too far distant from the water ways to be manufactured with any profit. This is therefore a question of the first consequence to the Province.

As for the City of Three-Rivers, it offers to the new road an excellent sea-port. Now the neighboring country is famous for its enormous export of hay. We have here, then, one of the best places, if not the best, for the embarkation of cattle from the west destined for Europe, the Antilles etc. Three-Rivers is, furthermore, admirably situated for the export of merchantable timber. Now the projected road would of course carry down timber from all places over its line, which would give a supply, in winter as well as in summer, to the magnificent saw-mills which we possess here. Is anything more required to point out the interests which the citizens of Three-Rivers ought to feel in the opening of such a road?

As to Canada as a Dominion, the proposed trunk line would give, on British soil, the shortest route from the Atlantic to the Pacific. By means of this new road the North-West trade would cease to pay tribute to the United States, seeing that over it would be found the shortest and most rapid route.

As to the British Empire, it has the greatest concern in having our transcontinental road built sheltered throughout from an armed attack in time of war.

The foregoing indicates, as it appears to me, how important it is to agitate as quickly as possible the question of such a road. This is the most striking portion of the report of our Board of Trade. Hardly two years ago, when the shortest railway line from one ocean to the other was up for discussion, some allusion was made to a new direct line from Québec to Callender. Persuaded at the time as to the incontestable advantages of such line, I was astonished at there being so little interest taken in the matter, and I asked the reason from several prominent men, who were in a position to give me the information. Nearly all of them appeared astonished at such a proposal. Irritated by so much indifference, I concluded by ascertaining

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that no one in Parliament or out of it, appeared to have any personal or direct interest in the building of such a line. The Board of Trade of Three Rivers must then be congratulated on having so clearly understood how great were the advantages offered by the proposed road, not only to the country in general, but especially to the people of this district.

On the eve of the Dominion General Elections, the Board of Trade caused the question to be agitated as much as possible. It appears to be the duty of every intelligent voter of the district to interest himself actively in the scheme. It is of consequence, in fact, that all the Dominion members from this district, without regard to party, should agree that this scheme ought to take a practical shape without further loss of time.

Why do not the newly elected members to the Quebec Legislature do the same? Let us hope, for the sake of our country's future that skillful and upright patriots will not be found wanting, and that the proposed line will take a practical shape in a serious manner.

In a former article, I showed the interest that the Board of Trade takes in Agriculture. I trust that I have now proved that the members of this Board, and especially its able secretary, have deserved well of their country by drawing, as they have done, public attention to these important subjects.

THE WORK ON THE SHORT LINE RAILWAY OF THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC SHOULD BE COMMENCED
WITHIN THE COUNTY OF MASKINONGÉ.

Mr. Editor:—To-day, I am going to keep the promise made last week, viz., to establish that the work on the short line railway should be begun in the county of Maskinongé. But before entering upon the details of the proof of this proposition, I will lay down as general and unconditional principles:—1st. That the chief and most important object that this Road is called upon to fulfil for the Province of Quebec, is the development in this vast and rich region as yet almost unexplored, of settlement, of the manufacture of timber and the working of mines, and the countless industries which will be favored by the great water-powers which are to be met with throughout the whole length of the proposed road; 2nd. The considerable shortening of the distance in favor of the transcontinental trade of the Dominion; 3rd. The defensive power which it will assure to the Dominion, as an interior passage for the circulation of its troops, and a strong and vigorous population massed behind the Laurentides.

Nevertheless, in consideration of the limited resources at the command of our Governments, and the ever pressing needs which are continually being produced by the rapid development of our young country, it would not be wise to sink in real estate a large capital a long time before it could bring us the least advantage.

This is what the citizens perfectly understood, when, at the last session of the Dominion Parliament, they sought for and obtained a charter for the construction of a railway which would start from the lower end of the County of Maskinongé, passing by Mattawin, cross the upper portion of the counties of Berthier, Joliette, and would reach Lake Nipissing by way of the River Rouge, Lake Desert and the Counties of Algoma and Pontiac.

Later on, as the promoters of the Maskinongé and Nipissing have set forth in a memorial which ought at the present moment to be in the hands of the Government, when the road shall have reached the Canadian Pacific at Nipissing, it will be absolutely necessary to prolong it for the accommodation of the transcontinental trade by the shortest way, to Quebec, where it will be able to join with the Intercolonial and the Levis and Kennebec, which will carry the goods to the winter ports.

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But so long as the road will not be in a condition to carry the great trade of the Indies, of Western Canada, of Western America, it would be pure folly to go and bury millions in the completion of a road as costly as the one which would climb to Mattawin either from Three-Rivers or Quebec, through a country which is one continual succession of mountains, rivers and ravines, almost impassable.

Even though the Governments should triple their subsidies, I exceedingly doubt whether any company would undertake works such as these; for the cost of the carriage alone could hardly be paid out of the transport of timber and the goods of the first settlers. The building of such a trunk line as this can have no chance of success until the immense traffic from the west will justify the Governments and the company building it in making such great disbursements with the foreknowledge of a near reward. To act otherwise would be to expose them infallibly to the sad disappointments of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway Company. Whereas, by beginning the works at the lower end of the County of Maskinongé, it will turn out, without injury to the private interests of Quebec and Three-Rivers, that the first objects of the road will be carried out sooner and better, and this not only without costing the country or the company a single cent more than is necessary to make the road complete; but by thus giving a guarantee to the local Government it will handle sooner the subsidy granted to it, and will give to the company the assurance of immediate returns.

This is how it is done. At first in the comparison I wish to make between the superior advantages offered by the County of Maskinongé in being the starting point of the works, over Three-Rivers and Quebec, I will leave aside the latter locality, for the unfairness of the comparison is so self-evident that it is not necessary to dwell upon it, I will only stop to dwell upon the chief reasons why the road should start from this country and not from Three-Rivers.

Now if you take a map published by the Crown Land Department of Quebec in 1880, what do you see when looking at it?

That between Three-Rivers, passing by St. Elie and Les Pins Rouges, to a certain point behind and to the west of Bark Lake (now Lake St. Bernard) and near the River Mostigosh where the road must necessarily pass, we find there is a distance of about 53 miles. But inasmuch as the many and great obstacles which exist on this route will of necessity require for a railway long and manifold curves, we can, without fear of being in error,

increase this distance to at least 65 miles. From Louiseville or from Maskinongé to go to the same point, by passing by the Falls of Park River, we have only 30 miles by the map, and 36 miles by a careful survey which the engineers have just completed of it; and by adding 18 miles the distance from Louiseville to Three Rivers we will have 54 miles a gain of 14 miles over the former route.

It will then be more advantageous for Three Rivers itself, as regards distance, to have their means of communication by the County of Maskinongé than by a road which starts directly from that city.

Now if we take into consideration the difference in cost between these two roads we will discover an enormous difference, for the Maskinongé road, which has been laid out as far as the junction above mentioned, will be extremely easy to build and will not cost more than \$20,000 per mile on the average; whereas the road from Three Rivers, which will have to cross in an oblique direction the whole of the Laurentide chain of mountains, as well as the rivers, the countless and frightful ravines which exist between Three Rivers and St. Elie, cannot certainly cost less than \$40,000 per mile, which will give in favour of the Maskinongé road the respectable sum of \$1,520,000. And this estimate is made on the supposition that our road arriving at Maskinongé will proceed to Three Rivers over an independent road, but as it is likely that there will probably be found some means of arriving at an arrangement with the Canadian Pacific for the right of haulage over its track from Maskinongé to Three Rivers, we will thus save an expenditure of \$1,880,000.

Furthermore we must consider that at a distance of 15 miles from its terminus the Maskinongé Road will be in position materially to assist colonization; whereas, if leaving from Three Rivers, 50 miles will have to be got over before the road can be of any assistance to a new settlement.

The advantages will be on the same side as regards the increase in the price of the sale of crown lands.

To conclude, let us add to all these reasons, which militate so strongly in favor of the Maskinongé road, the fact that this branch must of necessity be constructed at some period or other; for no one is ignorant of the fact that the building of this road is going to build up an immense trade in sawn lumber, and that this trade has its principal outlet in the United States. Now, whatever is done cannot prevent a product from seeking to secure the easiest and shortest road to its place of market. And the River Richelieu being the best means of transport for this commodity to our

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Railway which will bring the timber to the port the most conven-
ient to the River Richelieu. And this place is to be found in the
county of Maskinongé almost opposite this river.

Inasmuch, therefore, as Maskinongé County offers such su-
perior advantages for the initial point of the building of our great
national highway, let all true French Canadian patriots lend
their assistance to the citizens of the County of Maskinongé, who
have already done more than all the rest to ensure the success of
this brilliant and great enterprise.

There is no private interest in opposition to it ; the general
interests of the country demand it.

MASKINONGÉ.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT

OF THE TWO SCHEMES FOR RAILWAY COLONIZATION OF THE REGION IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC SITUATE TO THE WEST OF THE ST. MAURICE.

A. BRANCH LINE PROJECT.

1

Railway from Three Rivers to Mattawan:

Railway from St. Lin to Mattawan: The Great Northern, connecting with the Joliette road and continued as far as Quebec, at the base of the Laurentides:

Railway from St. Jérôme to Lake Desert:

Railway from Buckingham to Lake Desert:

Railway from Pontiac to Lake Nipissing:

Railway along the Lièvre to Lake Nominigüe;

2.

Length of all these fragmentary lines:
 Three Rivers road.....100 Miles
 Great Northern.....150 "
 St. Lin to Mattawan.....80 "
 St. Jérôme to Lake Desert.....150 "
 Pontiac to Lake Nipissing.....200 "
 Du Lièvre to Lake Nominigüe.....100 "

TOTAL.....780

3.

Necessity for surmounting the Laurentides six times:

4.

Scattered fragmentary lines:

5.

Large unserved areas between the various branches:

6.

Merely tributaries to foreign lines:

7.

Small local traffic to support each fragment:

8.

A system serving purely local interests,

9.

The scheme is expensive and not sufficient.

B. MASKINONGÉ AND NIPISSING RAILWAY PROJECT.

1.

A Railway from Maskinongé to Lake Nipissing setting out from Lake Nipissing and reaching Quebec, passing by Lake Desert and Mattawin: Having a branch line from Ste Thérèse to the Joliette Road; another from St. Félix de Valois to connect with the Maskinongé and Nipissing at St. Alexis-des-Monts; another from St. Alexis to the lower end of the county of Maskinongé:

2.

Length of this system;
 From Lake Nipissing to Quebec.....430 Miles
 Branch from Maskinongé.....20 "
 Branch from Ste Thérèse to St. Jacques.....25 "
 Branch from St. Felix de Valois to St. Alexis-des-Monts.....20 "

TOTAL.....495 "

3.

Scaling the Laurentides only once.

4.

An uninterrupted line.

5.

Traversing from one end to the other, and that too in the centre, the region to be opened up by colonization.

6.

The feeders complete and independent.

7.

Immense traffic over the whole line.

8.

A system of much greater importance with respect to the transcontinental traffic, and the military defence of the country.

9.

The plan costing two-thirds less, and accomplishing much better the end proposed.

REMARKS.

The building of all the fragments of the branch line project, first given above, would probably exhaust the subsidies which the

Dominion Government would grant to the railways of the Province of Quebec, in that case our Province would incur the great risk of being left with a badly arranged system; for we cannot foresee that the Local Government will ever assist this first project exclusively at the expense of one great all-uniting, all-absorbing route.

There is still time to adopt the new scheme without abandoning, on that account, the works already begun. In fact, besides the roads from St. Jérôme and Pontiac, there still remain 430 miles to be built, in order to carry out the frame-work of the first scheme. This is the length of the Maskinongé and Nipissing as far as Quebec, including the branch lines of Ste. Thérèse, St. Félix de Valois and Maskinongé.

NOTE.—The distances mentioned are taken by air line measurement on the map of the Province of Quebec, prepared for the Department of Crown Lands, by Mr. Eugène Taché, in 1880.

The Curé, F. Mondor, says: There is still much land fit for cultivation between Mattawin and St. Alexis, and everywhere timber, magnificent water-powers and mines.

REGION IN THE PRO-
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JAMES J. WHITE, ESQ.,

Managing Director M. & N. Railway.

DEAR SIR,—I beg leave to again report to you on progress made by the Engineers up to 'Xmas last. In my first and second reports I stated ten miles had been located, starting from a point near Maskinongé Station, Canadian Pacific Railway, and running in a north-westerly direction to the foot of the Laurentian Range. This consists chiefly of sand, gravel and clay loam.

Three ravines will have to be crossed; they are about two hundred feet wide and twenty-five or thirty deep. As timber is very plentiful in the vicinity, I think trestle bridges will be best until such times as we can have the construction trains running.

From the River St. Lawrence to the foot of the Laurentian Range, the land is all under cultivation, and as I passed through during harvest time, am prepared to say I seldom came across such crops in any part of Canada.

On striking the mountains a different scene presents itself. vast forests of magnificent timber meet the eye, the value of which cannot be over-estimated, and, on crossing the Range, fertile valleys are to be met with frequently—thriving villages here and there, surrounded by prosperous farmers.

With regard to minerals, as yet I have seen nothing but graphite and iron. Reliable reports lately received from this part speak of the country from St. Alexis to Mattawin River as being, "well timbered, rich land, and abounding in minerals." The lakes are teeming with fish, principally lake and river trout, and pickerel and pike of a very fine size and quality.

Magnificent water-power is to be had all through this country, which no doubt ere long will be all taken up for manufacturing purposes.

In addition to the ten miles of location, a survey of forty more has been made by Mr. C. E. Towle, C. E., the result has been more than satisfactory, and I feel sure that on locating the line over the mountains, the work will be found to be comparatively light; thence to end of route I do not anticipate any trouble.

Yours Respectfully,

W. McL. MAINGY,
Chief Engineer.

OTTAWA, March 1st '87.

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